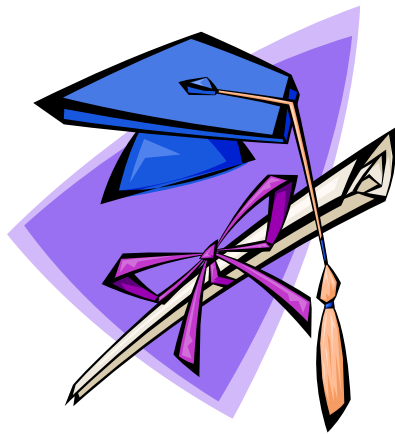# SENIOR PROJECT FRAMEWORK
A GUIDE FOR SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOLS

"ENTER TO LEARN: LEAVE TO ACHIEVE"

2005 - 2006

South Dakota Department of Education
700 Governors Drive
Pierre SD 57501

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Senior Project Framework Committee wishes you the best of luck in implementing Senior Projects in your school district. We have tried to include in this initial Guide the most relevant information, guidelines, and materials for school districts that wish to implement Senior Projects. In your journey to implement this Framework, let us know what worked and what didn't work for you. We would also be interested in any new materials or strategies that you used in addition to the Guide. Please send this information to:

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INTRODUCTION TO SENIOR PROJECTS

USING THE SENIOR PROJECT FRAMEWORK

The Senior Project Framework Guide is intended to be a "menu" for school districts to use in designing a local Senior Project program.   The Framework is divided into four phases – the research paper, the project, the portfolio and the presentation.

The Framework is available in Microsoft Word on the South Dakota Department of Education's High Schools That Work, http://doe.sd.gov/octe/highschools, and Tech Prep, http://doe.sd.gov/octe/techprep/index.asp, websites. Using these websites, you can download the forms you need and work with your school team to adapt them to fit your program.

The Senior Project can be implemented as a stand-alone semester or year-long course, as a part of Senior English or integrated into the core Senior courses. The Project can be a requirement for graduation with either a letter grade assigned or pass/fail status. High school credit can also be awarded.

You can see from the above, that flexibility is built into the Framework plan. Your school can tailor the program and documents to fit your needs, resources and schedules.

RATIONALE FOR SENIOR PROJECTS

This Framework was developed with the following quotation as its guiding theme: "Enter to Learn; Leave to Achieve."

Senior Projects allow students the opportunity to consolidate and showcase the learning from their high school years into a meaningful and relevant project. It is their venue to connect with the world outside of school and to demonstrate they have the skills to go on to further education and/or enter the workforce.

Senior Projects allow schools an avenue to promote the relevance and increase the rigor of the high school experience. A question we often hear from students is "Why do I have to learn this?" Senior Projects allow students to see the connections between what they are learning now and the application to their future lives. They become an "expert" in their chosen topic area and showcase the skills and abilities they have gained through their high school experience.

Senior Projects add increased rigor to the Senior year. The Senior Project also provides students with focused and structured learning, gives them experience with the responsibility for meeting timelines, making decisions, doing research, preparing a presentation and making presentations – all skills needed for success in the workplace. Senior Projects provide an opportunity for students to model the 3 R's for schools – rigor, relevance, and results!

SENIOR PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Senior Project is a high school capstone experience that requires students to demonstrate not only what they know, but what they can do. States, school districts, and high schools focusing on restructuring, raising high school standards, and actively engaging all Seniors in a challenging and relevant educational process incorporate the Senior Project.

The Senior Project consists of four phases. The first phase includes the preparation of a research paper by each student. The research paper contains a thesis that the writer proves (supports) or disproves through research evidence.   A student should carefully consider a possible product before selecting a research topic. Selection of a topic takes considerable thought. The paper exhibits the acquisition of knowledge through researching, writing, interviewing, and synthesizing an application of the real-world skills of time management, organization, self-discipline, persistence, and problem-solving.

The second phase includes the creation of a product that is an appropriate and logical extension of the research paper. The product must demonstrate the application of acquired knowledge through a reflective, physical, and/or intellectual stretch. It is recommended that Projects be completed during the school year. However, certain exceptions may be considered. For example, agriculturally related projects may need to begin the summer prior to the Senior year.

The third phase is the portfolio which includes specific writing throughout the project period. These writings will include reflective and informative journals, business letters, brochure, overviews, and a final Senior Project reflection.

The fourth phase is a presentation before a Senior Project panel with a ten to fifteen minute formal speech on the paper, the project, and personal growth. A question and answer period will follow the presentation. The portfolio will be provided to the panel of judges for review. The Senior Project panel can be composed of teachers, mentors, parents, and community members, preferably with knowledge or background of the project area. The panel and portfolio experiences provide the student with an opportunity to synthesize the paper, project, and self-growth journey using communication skills related to fluency, knowledge depth, listening, explaining, defending, comprehending, and applying real world skills.

Throughout this process, students will benefit greatly from the expertise of a carefully selected project mentor and faculty advisor. They will serve as resources to the student during all phases of the Senior Project.

ELEMENTS OF A HIGH-QUALITY SENIOR PROJECT PROGRAM

1. **Clear and Aligned Purpose** - Student learning outcomes are aligned with school, district, and state mission and goals.

2. **Explicit, Rigorous Criteria** - Performance is assessed by application of established criteria.

3. **Student-Directed Learning and Youth Engagement** - The student takes leadership for selecting, planning, and implementing his/her own learning goals.

4. **Clear Scaffolding of Skills** - Students need instruction and practice for the skills required in the project. Some schools include a culminating project in elementary and middle school levels as well as high school.

5. **Learning Stretch** - The project poses a challenge that requires significant new learning.

6. **Authentic Project** - Students apply core academic knowledge and skills beyond the traditional classroom setting to address a real problem.

7. **Community Involvement** - Members of the broader community play an important role in projects as mentors, panelists, advisors and/or resources.

8. **Authentic Audience** - Expert individuals and community organizations are critical members of the audience to hear and review the project.

9. **Coordination and Comprehensive Communication** - Students, parents, community members, teachers and administrators understand the purpose and processes of the project.

10. **Adequate Staffing and Supervision** - There is sufficient staff to coordinate the program and provide support to teachers, parents, and community partners.

11. **Mechanism for Training Community Partners** - Community partners are provided training to perform their role as co-educators and authentic partners.

12. **Mechanism for Parent Involvement** - Expectations are developed for parent involvement in the design, implementation, and celebration of the project.

13. **Ongoing Professional Development and Program Improvement** - School leaders and community partners organize formal training sessions, reflection activities and opportunities to continuously improve the program.

14. **A Plan for Risk Management and Liability** - Schools and communities ensure the project takes place in a safe environment and risk is managed.

15. **Celebration and Recognition** - All collaborators are provided opportunities to be recognized and celebrate the success of the project.

Education Commission of the States, 2004

INITIAL DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

SENIOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

1. Organize

As planning gets underway, reflect on these questions:
- Does the administration support the program?
- Does the staff support the program?
- Who are key people on staff or in the community that can be counted on to assist with the program?
- Has funding been allocated?
- What is your timeline?

_____ 1. There is support from administration, faculty, and the school board for Senior Projects.
_____ 2. A Project Coordinator has been assigned.
_____ 3. A budget has been designated.
_____ 4. A steering committee has been formed for the purpose of putting together the Framework.
_____ 5. A suggested timeline has been determined.

Then, considering your answers to these questions, begin the planning process.

2. Plan

In this phase, you are researching the answers to these questions "What do we want the Senior Project program to look like in our school?" and "Who is responsible for what areas of the Project?"

_____ 1. Seek input from parents, faculty, and administration through surveys and conversations.
_____ 2. Review the State Framework for Senior Projects to become familiar with Project components.
_____ 3. Visit with other schools who have implemented the Senior Projects.
_____ 4. Review and refine the suggested timeline.

3. Design

The next step in the implementation process involves identifying and tailoring the components for your school. You will want to think about the big picture – how will all of the components work together? How are you going to communicate the program to administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community in a way they can understand and support? Once you have decided on your overall approach, you will need to develop the specifics – the Guide for your school, the forms you will use, and the communication process with students.

_____ 1. Identify components from the State Framework to include in your program plan.
_____ 2. Revise the identified sample forms and documents from the Framework to include in your Guide.
_____ 3. Decide if the Senior Project program will be a stand-alone course or integrated into the English course.
_____ 4. Determine if high school credit will be offered.
_____ 5. Determine if successful completion of the Senior Project is required for high school graduation.
_____ 6. Determine if the Senior Project will be pass/fail or assigned a letter grade.
_____ 7. Determine if the Senior Project program will be a semester in length or year long.
_____ 8. Get endorsement of your program plan from administrators and staff.
_____ 9. Identify roles and responsibilities for the Steering Committee, Project Coordinator, Faculty Advisor, Project Mentor, and students.
_____ 10. Create action plans, timelines, and calendars.
_____ 11. Prepare your plan for review including a draft of the Guide for your school, as well as the action plan and timelines.

4. Implement

When you reach this step, you have already done the hardest work. A phased implementation has hopefully been identified in your plan. Before you initiate the Senior Project program, you will want to assess the need for staff development and carry it out in a systematic and timely way.

The Senior Project Initiative is a whole high school program. A variety of people are going to participate in the program activities. Training will be critical to achieve the desired results. Training should provide an overview of Senior Projects in general, specific information on the program for your school, roles and responsibilities of project personnel, as well as the entire staff, administrative forms and timelines.

_____ 1. Communicate the Senior Project program design and plan to staff.
_____ 2. Conduct staff development.
_____ 3. Refine course content, if needed, to fit program requirements.
_____ 4. Initiate the Senior Project course, if this is part of your program design.
_____ 5. Review progress regularly, adjusting expectations and plans as needed.

5. Evaluate

Project evaluation plans were built into the planning steps when you examined requirements and procedures for your local program. In this phase, you will need to frame your evaluation based on your goals for Senior Project program, as well as student outcomes. Be sure to include an annual review in your evaluation plan.

_____ 1. Goals have been identified for the Senior Project program.
_____ 2. Student outcomes have been identified.
_____ 3. Analyze program and student results.
_____ 4. Recommend program modifications based upon results.

Final Note

As your school district develops and implements the Senior Project program, please share your results with others. Your experiences and materials and tools you develop to use for program delivery will be invaluable to others.

SENIOR PROJECT GUIDELINES

1. Participating in the Senior Project is a requirement for graduation from _____ High School. The Project grade will be recorded on the high school transcript; however no credits are assigned.

2. Each Senior must have a Faculty Advisor and a Mentor. No faculty member may accept more than five advisees. The student will be assigned an Advisor at the beginning of the school year. The Project Mentor cannot be a relative and <u>must</u> have some expertise in the project area.

3. A Senior Project proposal explaining the Project in full must be completed. The proposal must be neatly typed; no hand-written proposals will be accepted. All needed documents and guidelines concerning the Senior Project are available in electronic form.

4. The student must submit two copies of the Senior Project Proposal to the Faculty Advisor by _____. The Faculty Advisor must sign the project form before it is given to the Senior Project Steering Committee.

5. The student's parent/guardian must also sign the proposal to indicate approval of the project. It is the student's responsibility to inform his/her parent/guardian of any changes in the proposal made after acquiring their signature(s).

6. The student must also sign the proposal to indicate having read all the materials related to the Senior Project. The student must agree to adhere to the requirements of the Senior Project and the requests of the committee.

7. The Senior Project Steering Committee, composed of faculty, business and community members, and parents, will consider all project proposals. This committee will maintain the authority to require revisions or to reject any proposal which it feels is unsatisfactory. Most revisions are related to unclear goals and insufficient description of activities.

8. Senior Project presentations will be conducted from _____ through _____, 20___. (date and time)

9. A student may not be paid for his/her project work unless extenuating circumstances require such payment.

10.   No relative may be in a direct line of responsibility for the student or for the area or department in which he/she works.

11. A student may do his/her project at a place where he/she has been previously employed only if the activities are completely different from those he/she has done before.

12. When the project proposal is submitted, it must contain the signatures of the Faculty Advisor, the Project Mentor and the student's parent/guardian, and the student.

13. During the project each student will keep a weekly journal and a log of time spent in project activities.

14. At the conclusion of the project, the journal, portfolio, Mentor's evaluation, and any other required materials will be submitted by _____ a.m. on _____, 20_____.

15. The Senior Project Committee will make a final evaluation of the student's project and will determine whether the student passes or fails. The evaluation score will appear on the student's final transcript. An unacceptable evaluation requires successful completion of the project before a diploma will be awarded.

16. Each student should contact his/her Faculty Advisor once each week during the course of the project by whatever means the two determine (visit, telephone, fax, e-mail). The Faculty Advisor must read the student's journal weekly.

17. Failure to comply with any of the Senior Project guidelines will jeopardize graduation.

18. Students will display or present their projects on _____, 20____. Presentation times will be assigned at a later date.

19. If the project is unavailable locally, out-of-town travel may be considered.

LETTER TO SENIORS

(date)

Dear Senior:

The *Student Guide* for your Senior Project has been written to help you through the stages of the Project you will engage in this year. With careful planning of your time, the Senior Project can be a rewarding learning experience. This Project will be a memorable accomplishment of your final year in high school.

Every Senior will complete the four phases of the Project. Your final Senior Project grade will be important to and incorporated in many classes you are taking this year.

The purpose of the Guide is to help you understand the requirements of the four project phases. You must successfully complete each of these phases: a paper, a product, a portfolio, and a presentation.

Good luck with your Project. Dare to take risks, stretch your imagination and skills, and do the best job you can. You will join thousands of other high school Seniors from across the country in making this a very important part of your senior year.

Sincerely,

High School Principal

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LETTER TO PARENTS

(Date)

Dear Parents or Guardians of Seniors:

This is a momentous year for your Senior. You have learned by now that our school has set high expectations for our students. We believe each student should have the opportunity to display his or her skills through a Senior Project. As your student completes this Project, he/she will demonstrate the following skills: reading, writing, speaking, accessing and processing information, thinking, self-discipline, problem-solving, organization, and implementing technology. These skills will be showcased through a four-phase process to include:

- a word-processed research paper,
- a related physical product to demonstrate an aspect of the research and/or service to the community,
- a portfolio, and
- a presentation given before a review panel composed of educators and community members.

The Senior Project topic is based on new knowledge and provides growth through a new learning experience.

The Senior Project involves parental and teacher support as well as student initiative and self-discipline. Attached is a copy of the due dates for the Project components.

Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the school at _____ to speak with me or any of the following Senior Project teachers: _____.

Sincerely,

High School Principal

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SENIOR PROJECT AGREEMENT FORM
Student – Parent – Faculty – Mentor

A.   Student Applicant

I agree
- to adhere to the schedule and objectives which I have set for myself.
- to make progress reports at the times and in the form designated by my Faculty Advisor.
- to follow all the guidelines (which I have read and understand) established for my Senior Project.

I understand
- that the quality of my completion of Senior Project (excellent, acceptable, and unacceptable or letter grade) will be noted on my transcript.
- that successful completion and acceptable reporting of the Project are required for graduation.
- that the school may not be liable for any injuries that I may sustain as a result of this Project.
- that I may be removed from the Project if I do not follow the guidelines.

_____   _____

Signature of Student Applicant   Date

B.   Parent/Guardian

Please do not sign below unless the following is true:

I have read the rationale, guidelines, and Project proposal and have discussed them with my son/daughter. I realize that the school cannot directly supervise him/her and understand that the school may not be liable for any injuries that he/she may sustain as a result of this project. I understand that it is my son's/daughter's responsibility to inform me of any changes in the proposal made after my signature.

_____   _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

C.   **Faculty Advisor**

Please do not sign below unless the following is true:

I accept the responsibility as Faculty Advisor for this student if his/her project is accepted as proposed. I will expect regular progress reports from him/her during project and I will be willing to assist this student as needed before the project begins and during the project. I agree to perform all duties outlined on the Role of Faculty Advisor form.

_____   _____

Signature of Faculty Advisor   **Date**

D.   **Senior Project Mentor**

Please do not sign below unless the following is true:

I have seen a copy of the rationale and guidelines for the Senior Project and the applicant has given me a copy of the Senior Project Mentor role. He/she has discussed with me the aims and objectives of the Senior Project. We have discussed both the goals and our mutual expectations. I have read his/her proposed project. I approve it and will fulfill my obligations as outlined in the Role of the Senior Project Mentor form.

_____   _____

Signature of Senior Project Mentor   **Date**

SENIOR PROJECT TIMELINE

All journeys begin with an important first step. The first step in a Senior Project is to choose a topic that interests you, will be fun to study and is worthwhile. Refer to the chart below and begin planning your Project as outlined.

Activity	Due Date	Date Completed	Comments
Commitment Form			
Student's Signature			
Parent's Signature			
Senior Project Advisor's Signature			
Product Mentor's Signature			
Letter of Intent			
Faculty Advisor Assigned			
Research Paper			
Topic			
Outline			
First Draft			
Revision			
Final Draft			
Product/Process			
Mentor Identified			
Plan Submitted			
Parent Approval			
Cost Analysis Submitted			
Resources Identified			
Procedures Outlined			
Journal/Log			
Portfolio Prepared			
Product/Process Completed			
Oral Presentation			
Speech Outline Submitted			
Note Cards Developed			
Visual Aids Developed			
Portfolio Completed			
Speech/Presentation Practiced			
Follow-up			
Feedback Received			
Thank-you notes			
Portfolio Completed			

SENIOR PROJECT
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITES

SENIOR PROJECT ROLES

Role of the Student

It is the responsibility of the student to meet all guidelines and timelines for the Senior Project.

1. Complete requirements of the Project in accordance with the pre-established checklist and timetable. *(See pages 13-14, 19)*
2. Select a Senior Project Mentor. *(See pages 24-25).*
3. Maintain copies (paper and electronic) of all work in progress, rough drafts, final draft, etc. *(See pages 39-40, 45).*
4. Submit a rough draft of the research paper to the assigned Faculty Advisor and English teacher.
5. Document product/process selection with the Faculty Advisor. *(See page 43).*
6. Keep a project log or journal. *(See page 46).*
7. Develop copies of the oral presentation outline for the evaluation panel. *(See pages 51-52).*
8. Develop a portfolio to display work. *(See pages 45, 47-49).*
9. Write and distribute teacher-approved thank you letters to your Mentor and members of the Senior Project panel. Complete and return a Senior Project evaluation concerning the experience.

Role of the Faculty Advisor

All professional staff members (teachers, counselors, and administrators) are available as advisors. Advisors should limit their advisees to no more than five to be able to work effectively with each one.

1. Act as a consultant to the student, providing assistance with selection of the Project topic and final approval of Project scope. *(See pages 29-32, 43).*
2. Assist and advise the student in the technical portion of the Project. *(See pages 33-36).*
3. Serve as the liaison with the student and the Mentor. The Mentor should be contacted during the first week of the Project and any other time that may become necessary.
4. Oversee student work in accordance with Project guidelines.
5. Review the rough draft of the research paper and advise the student about needed revisions. *(See pages 38, 41).*
6. Evaluate the final draft of the research paper. *(See pages 38, 41).*
7. Allocate related class time to work with students regarding their Senior Project.
8. Evaluate the product/process according to the Project guidelines. *(See page 43).*
9. Coach the student in preparation for the oral presentation and verify technical accuracy of the presented materials. *(See pages 51-56).*
10. Administer an end-of-Project student evaluation survey form for the purpose of Project improvement.

11. Serve as the liaison with the Mentor and Senior Project Committee, providing them with information such as individual student abilities and appropriateness of goals and activities.
12. Assist with the role of the English teacher that follows.

Role of English Teacher
The English Teacher is responsible for monitoring the research phase of the project.
1. Instruct the student in the proper form and process of the research paper. *(See pages 38-40).*
2. Collect and evaluate all documentation pertaining to the Senior Project. *(See pages 45-46).*
3. Review the rough draft of the research paper and advise the student as to where revisions may be needed.
4. Evaluate the final draft of the research paper. *(See page 41).*
5. Discuss with the Faculty Advisor the content of the research paper and integrate evaluations of form and content to final project grade. *(See page 41).*
6. Coach the student in appropriate methods of giving an oral presentation. *(See pages 51-56).*
7. Conduct a post presentation discussion with the student for the purpose of Project improvement and implementation. *(See page 58).*

Role of Senior Project Mentor
The role of the Project Mentor is essential to the success of the Senior Project. Each student must have a Mentor who has expertise/experience with the topic. *(See pages 24-26).*
1. Assist and advise the student in technical aspects of the research paper and/or product/process.
2. Serve as a resource to the student in all stages of the product/process Project development.
3. Allocate time and make arrangements to work with student on the Project.
4. Sign and return the Mentor Agreement Form.
5. Provide accurate and honest verification of the student's work. *(See page 26).*
6. Document the hours spent with the student working on the Senior Project. *(See page 26).*
7. Additional assistance could be provided by:
    a. reviewing student research materials,
    b. evaluating the product/process,
    c. advising student in planning the oral presentation, and
    d. attending the oral presentation.

Role of the Senior Project Steering Committee
The Steering Committee provides overall direction of the Project. Committee members should include representation from the following: administrators, teachers, parents, students, and business/community members. *(See page 27).*
1. Agree to meet on a quarterly basis.
2. Create an action plan for implementing the program. *(See pages 10-12).*

3. Prepare the Implementation Guide specific to your school.
4. Determine timelines for all phases of the Project. *(See page 19).*
5. Approval of all Senior Project topics and projects. *(See pages 29-36).*

Role of Senior Project Coordinator
Schools should have one person designated as the Coordinator. This could be a paid position with release time provided. Specific duties are as follows:
1. Serve as the Chair of the Project Steering Committee. *(See pages 22, 27).*
2. Prepare a yearly calendar with timelines for the Project. *(See page 19).*
3. Organize the panel of judges for student presentations.
4. Coordinate the assignments of students with Faculty Advisors.

THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR PROJECT MENTOR

This page is to be given to the Project Mentor at the time you discuss with him/her what his/her duties will be. Be sure that your Mentor reads your finished written proposal and understands the commitment <u>before</u> signing the proposal.

The role of the Project Mentor is essential to the success of the Senior Project at _____ High School. As responsible men and women in the community, the Project Mentors play an active part in the students' learning experience.

As Project Mentor, you will be asked to accept the following responsibilities:

1. To help the student organize his/her Project and then indicate approval by signing the appropriate statement at the bottom of the proposal form.
2. To supervise the student as he/she follows through on his/her Project proposal.
3. To sign time sheets to indicate that he/she has completed the required hours.
4. To complete an evaluation form at the close of the Project.

Following is additional information which we feel you will find useful:

1. The Senior Project begins on _____ and continues through _____. Students are to work with you for a minimum of fifteen contact hours.

2. A student may <u>not</u> be paid for his/her Project work.

3. No relative may be in a direct line of supervision for the student. The student may not work at a relative's place of business or in a position in which he/she has been previously employed.

4. Each student will also be assigned a Faculty Advisor who acts as a consultant for the student when writing the research paper and again during the process/product development. Because the Faculty Advisor may or may not have expertise in the Project area, your assistance is especially important to the student. The Advisor will further act as a liaison between the Project Mentor and the school. Your contacts with the school can be made through this person or the Senior Project Coordinator listed on the following page.

5. The student is bound by a set of guidelines which he/she should share with you. Failure of the student to comply with these guidelines could jeopardize graduation.

6. The student will keep a journal and write a final evaluation of his/her Project. These are <u>not</u> to be done during his/her meetings with you.

7. In a pre-Project conference with the student, please establish a mutual understanding of what will be expected during project time.

We have asked each student to discuss with the Project Mentor the rationale and guidelines, as well as the aims and objectives of the Senior Project as it operates at _____ High School. If the student has not done so, please ask him/her to clarify these items for you.

We trust that the student's work will be beneficial not only to him/her, but also to you as the Project Mentor and that you will both gain satisfaction. Thank you for your interest in Senior Project. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call (Name and Contact Information)

_____.
(Senior Project Coordinator)

_____
Project Mentor Signature   Date

SENIOR PROJECT MENTOR VERIFICATION FORM

Student Name_____   Project _____

As a Senior Project Mentor, you have been chosen to verify this student's efforts on the Senior Project. Since most of the time spent on the project phase of the assignment has been out of class, verification of the student's efforts is necessary. Please answer the following questions to help us evaluate/document the 15 hours in the mentoring process. Please keep in mind that this student's research paper has already been evaluated. This form refers to the physical product/process.

1.   Can you verify that you spent at least 15 hours mentoring the student on this project?

       _____   Yes   _____   No

       Comments:

2.   Have you seen/discussed this project at different stages of completion, not just the final phase?

       _____   Yes   _____   No

       Comments:

3.   What specific problems did this student encounter and overcome?

4.   What successes have you seen this student achieve?

Signature_____Date _____

We appreciate your support and contribution to the student.

THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

The Senior Project Steering Committee is essential to the existence and success of the Senior Project. Without the contribution of the parents, teachers, and community members on the committee, administering such an undertaking would be impossible.

The Senior Project Committee may be divided into subcommittees. Each subcommittee is assigned a certain number of Projects to oversee. Because the subcommittees make every attempt to be consistent and fair in evaluating Projects, students may not move their projects from one subcommittee to another. The subcommittees' duties include:

1. Reviewing the Senior Project proposals

    In this capacity, the subcommittees determine whether the proposal meets the criteria and follows the guidelines of Senior Project. Each member reads the proposals individually. The subcommittee then meets as a group to discuss their impressions of the projects. At this meeting each project is either accepted as submitted, returned with suggested revisions, or rejected outright.

    The revisions suggested by the committee are designed to bring the Project into compliance with Project criteria and guidelines, to give the Project clearer focus or better structure, to assure that the student has enough activities to fulfill the fifteen hour mentoring requirement, to increase the accountability of the student, to protect the student applicant, and to improve the quality of the Project.

2. Evaluating the Project

    The subcommittee will evaluate the success or failure of the Projects assigned to it. This review includes reading the journal, the final evaluation, the mentor's evaluation, and the faculty advisor's comments, as well as reviewing any other materials promised as part of the Project. The subcommittee has the right to require the make-up of missing hours, the addition of material to the journal, the revision of final evaluations, or any other revision deemed necessary by the subcommittee to consider the Project as completed.

TOPIC SELECTION

TOPIC SELECTION GUIDELINES

A Senior Project is about doing and learning something that you want to do and learning more about! This is your chance to choose a topic that will be interesting and worthwhile and will extend your knowledge. However, making the decision may not be easy. Choose carefully, consult with your Faculty Advisor, and remember to keep your project manageable. Carefully choose a product or process that you can build or produce or a community-based service you can provide. Answer these questions as you decide your topic:

- Is there a clear connection between the research topic and the product/process you want to produce?
- Does the product/process represent significant amounts of time, effort, and appropriate complexity? Does it go beyond what you already know how to do?
- Is the project something you will do outside of your regular class or co-curricular requirements?
- Will the product involve tangible evidence of your work – either something physical that can be seen and touched, a community-based service that can be documented as beneficial or something that can be written, produced, taped, or presented?
- Is the project related to your chosen career cluster?

The following guidelines may assist in choosing the subject to be explored.

1. **The research topic should be one in which the student is interested, but not one about which the student is already an expert.**

   If a student has been a diabetic for ten years, worked closely with the Juvenile Diabetes Association, and has been a volunteer in the children's diabetic ward in a local hospital, he or she probably knows a great deal about the subject juvenile diabetes. Unless that student pursues a new angle to diabetes, that topic might not yield much new learning.

2. **The research topic may be one that requires cumulative knowledge across grade levels and content area.**

   It should be a natural outgrowth of interest and combined skills of all, or most content areas. For example, a student who researches the changes in the ozone layer is using cumulative knowledge from at least English, math, science, and history.

3. **Some preliminary research may be helpful to the student.**

   By reading about a certain topic, the student may expand his/her areas of interest. Possibilities for new areas of exploration may surface.

4. **The research topic should be one that is challenging to the student academically and creatively.**

   The student should take care not to choose a topic that is limited to relatively simple ideas or one that has little application or extension possibilities. The topic should require an academic and creative stretch/risk.

5. **Students should avoid choosing topics that might involve expenses they are not prepared to handle.**

   For example if the research involves travel or long distance calls, the student may want to make another choice. If the product that grows out of the research will require materials, the student may want to make another choice. Remember, the student is not required, encouraged, or advised to spend money in order to complete the project. Expenditures will not enhance the evaluation of the project.

6. **Primary research is a valuable component of any inquiry.**

   It may be wise, therefore, to explore the possibilities for personal interviews, informal surveys, empirical observation, etc., before making a final selection of topic.

7. **Students should avoid choosing topics that might endanger themselves or others.**

   For example, experiments which are potentially explosive or activities such as handling poisonous snakes are not appropriate.

8. **Students should use good judgment to be certain that the topics they choose are appropriate for presentation to a review panel and the general public.**

   Remember that the student must have *Project Proposal* approved by the Senior Project Steering Committee and Faculty Advisor prior to beginning the Project.

9. **The research topic should be one that is broad enough to allow the student access to enough information, yet narrow enough to make the research scope reasonable.**

   For example, a student choosing the career cluster Health Science would find it impossible to include everything about health science (home remedies, history of emergency services, the treatment of burns, how to stop bleeding, evolution of first aid courses, etc.) On the other hand, a student choosing to research *The Application of Band-Aids to Skin*

Abrasions probably will not find enough information. A better choice would be *Bandaging for Sports Injuries.*

10.   **The research topic should be related to the student's chosen career cluster.**

South Dakota has adopted the following 16 career clusters:

- Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law & Public Safety
- Manufacturing
- Retail/Wholesale Sales & Service
- Scientific Research/Engineering
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

The Senior Project should be related to one of these 16 areas.

SENIOR PROJECT TOPIC SELECTION RUBRIC

This rubric can be used by the Senior in selecting a Project topic and by the Steering Committee in approving a Project topic.

Component	1-Unacceptable	2-Marginal	3-Acceptable	4-Exemplary
Depth of Thought	Major gaps are evident. Little or no reasoning is demonstrated.	There are major gaps in reasoning. Reasoning is somewhat apparent, but is flawed.	Reasoning is apparent, but a few minor gaps or flaws exist.	Reasoning is clear, concise and effectively demonstrated.
Feasibility	The project solution is clearly not possible within the parameters set forth by the problem.	The feasibility was in question until an explanation was requested and given. The solution may not be possible within the parameters of the problem.	While the solution is valid, it may not be easily replicated.	It is clear that the method of solution is valid and can be readily replicated.
Attention to Detail	The project is generally characterized by superfluous or surface knowledge.	Only a few questions are answered in detail. The work generally does not attend to the underlying detail required by the problem.	Most of the questions posed by the problem are directly answered in detail.	Questions are anticipated and addressed.
Creativity	This approach to the project is a detail replication of an previous design. No new ideas are demonstrated.	The approach is obviously related to a previous design, but some novelty is shown.	While the design presented may be similar in approach to others, unique characteristics exist that make this design stand out.	The approach to the design is fresh, novel and unique.

EXAMPLES OF SENIOR PROJECT TOPICS
BY CAREER CLUSTER

The following list is a sampling of topics that could be used for Senior Projects. It is not an all-inclusive list, but is intended to serve as a starting place when beginning the process of topic selection.

Career Cluster	Research Paper	Project
Agricultural & Natural Resources	Animal Abuse	Humane Society volunteer
	Animal Abuse	Humane Society volunteer
	Crop	Planting a new crop, measuring yield results
	Deer Population	Wildlife study
	Floral Design	Make floral arrangements and market them
	Horse Training	Train a horse
	Horticulture	Build a greenhouse
	Landscape Design	Create and prepare a landscape design for a house
	Organic Farming	Analyze organic versus regular farming techniques by planting test lots
	Orphan Wild Animals	Animal rehabilitation volunteer
	Veterinary Medicine	Shadow veterinary doctor
Architecture & Construction	Home Building	Help build a Habitat for Humanities house
Arts, A/V Technology & Communications	Architecture	Draw blueprints, make a model
	Art Show	Organize an art showcase of your photography work
	Cartooning	Design a cartoon character
	Commercial Art	Commercial art advertising
	Impressionist Artists	Paint impressionistic art
	Murals	Paint mural
	Plays	Write a play, coordinate its presentation
	Poetry	Write a selection of poetry for possible publication
	Silent Films	Make silent movie
Business & Administration	Business Ownership	Start a small business which markets or produces a product or service
	Marketing and Promotion	Prepare/implement a business marketing plan
	Medical Secretary	Shadow medical secretary
	Stock Market	Chart stock

Career Cluster	Research Paper	Project
Education & Training	Coach	Serve as a coach for a sports or fine arts group
	Elementary Education	15 hours of Kindergarten
	Hearing Impaired	Learn sign language, teach it to a group of elementary school students
	Karate Skill Demonstration	Learn karate, do a demonstration of techniques and a report on the history and origins.
	Sports Broadcasting	Announce at a sports event, coordinate broadcasting arrangements with the radio station
Health Science	Children's Book	Research and write a children's book on a health topic. Read the book to an elementary school class.
	Crack Babies	Community Awareness program
	Dentistry	Work at a dental clinic
	Drug Testing	Work in health care facility
	Drugs in Elementary Schools	Present program in schools
	Emergency Room Medicine	Shadow emergency room doctors
	History of Diseases	Research changes in different types of diseases from the 1900's to present
	Nutritional Cooking	Prepare and sell a cookbook with recipes of nutritious foods
	Teens and Drugs	Write and perform one-act play
	Tobacco (Substance Abuse)	Conduct a school awareness program that could include presentations, guest speakers, brochures, posters, etc.
Hospitality & Tourism	Dance	Organize a dance team, prepare a program to present at a senior citizens center or during half time at a sporting event
	Music	Coordinate/present a piano recital, proceeds for charity
	Music Arranging	Write a composition for an orchestra
	Radio Broadcasting	Take part in a radio broadcast
	William Shakespeare	Shakespearean monologues performance
Human Services	Babysitting	Offer a series of classes in babysitting

Career Cluster	Research Paper	Project
Human Services	Care of Elderly	Volunteer in retirement/nursing home
	Child Abuse	Design a prevention program
	Handicapped Housing	Design barrier-free house
	Homeless	Coordinate a food and/or clothing drive
	Homeless People	Food-clothing drive
	Homeless People	Volunteer at a shelter
	Preschool Learning	Serve as a student teaching aide for a preschool
	Student Rights When Arrested	Handbook on What to Do
	Teen Peer Pressure	Write, direct, and perform a play
	Teen Pregnancy	Volunteer at a Crisis Center
Information Technology	Programming	Create a record-keeping program for a business
	Web Page	Design and maintain a web page for your school or a community organization
Law & Public Safety	Community Safety	Survey/analyze the community for safety issues. Prepare a written analysis to present to the city commission. Select one issue, such as vacant buildings, as the focus of your project.
Retail/Wholesale Sales & Service	Design	Research fashion design in history, create a dress/suit for a particular period
	Fashion	Sew prom dress
	Fashions 1940-1990	Fashion show
	Modeling	Study modeling techniques, model fashions for an event
Scientific Research/ Engineering	Hydropower	Create a model
	Water Pollution	Examine and test water nearby, compile statistics, compare to reports from some time ago
	Weather	Study and report on the changing weather patterns for a certain time period or region
	Weather Forecasting	Forecast weather for a week
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	Car Restoration	Restore an antique car

Career Cluster	Research Paper	Project
All Clusters	Individual Career Plan	Prepare a career plan for your interest area, arrange for job shadowing in your career area
	Job Certification	Select an occupational area and attain certification – child care, computers, nurses aide, etc.
	State/Community Analysis	Research, analyze, and predict the current job/occupational outlook for your community

PHASE I

RESEARCH PAPER

RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

Length: Eight pages minimum

Paper Submission: All students must submit a hard copy accompanied by an electronic copy in Microsoft Word saved on a CD or diskette.

Format: APA or MLA format, 12-point font, Times New Roman, all double-spaced. Use the format of heading and title when no title page is required.

> Upper left-hand corner after margin
>> Your name
>> English Teacher's name
>> Course
>> Date (month day, year)

Works Cited: This is an alphabetical listing of the sources cited in the paper to prove, support, or disprove the thesis statement. A minimum of five sources is required. One must be an interview.

Parenthetical Documentation: Any fact you use to back up the central point of your paper must be documented, *whether the fact is directly quoted or in your own words.* Paraphrasing does not mean changing every third word of the original language of the source. If you do not document a fact that supports your central point, you are guilty of **plagiarism.** If you use a writer's exact words but do not give credit and/or do not place the exact words in quotation marks, you have committed **plagiarism.**

Quotations: The only reason you need to use exact quotations is if the language of the original resource is very unusual and cannot be paraphrased or the exact quote supports or gives an example of the thesis statement already established. **If you think the original language must be used, please follow these guidelines:**

Never use a quotation without introducing who gave the quote and/or the significance of the quote. A quote by itself, even punctuated correctly, makes little sense if it is not worked smoothly into the context of your own sentence structure and into what your paper is trying to prove.

For quotations that are **four** lines long or longer, **indent** each line of the **entire** quote **one inch** and double space the material. **Do not use quotation marks.**

ASSEMBLING RESEARCH INFORMATION

Checklist for a Research Paper
- Construct a working bibliography
- Make note cards
- Organize the note cards and make an outline
- Write rough draft
- Revise to final draft
- Complete final paper

Making Note Cards
- Use a separate note card for each source
- Place the source number in the upper right corner of each card
- Use a separate note card for each main idea
- Write a label in the upper left corner of the card
- Write the page number at the bottom of each card
- Use only one side of the card
- Be sure to indicate quoted or paraphrased materials
- Be sure all notes exist within context and are accurately recorded
- Reread the notes to make sure you understand them

Organizing Note Cards
- Use label topics (from upper left corner) to organize the cards
- Discriminate between main and subordinate ideas
- Arrange cards in the order they will appear in the paper
- Write an outline that indicates the order

Writing a Rough Draft
An introductory paragraph is:
- A general statement of information
- A transition sentence using works directly related to the thesis
- A thesis statement and explanation that:
    1. Contains a one-sentence statement of the topic being examined
    2. States an opinion
    3. Narrows the topic so it may be adequately supported in research

The body of the paper contains:
- The weakest pro-argument or least important reason/example in support of the thesis
- Secondary strongest point
- The strongest pro-argument or most important reason/example in the support of the thesis
- Proper documentation of the sources

The conclusion:
- Restates the thesis
- Paraphrases or summarizes ideas supporting the thesis
- Takes the topic one step beyond and predicts the future of the problem

The bibliography:
- Is an alphabetical list
- Contains all sources used in the paper

Miscellaneous:
- Follow either MLA or APA style
- Avoid plagiarism - presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own
    1. Borrowing someone's words or ideas is acceptable as long as you give appropriate credit.
    2. Common knowledge does not require documentation

Writing the Final Paper
- Revise and edit the evaluated rough draft.
- Make a copy to share with your Mentor.

THESIS RESEARCH PAPER EVALUATION
Vancouver School District Senior Project

A score of 3 or 4 is a passing score for each criterion. A passing paper must reflect a score of 3 or 4 in all areas. Please circle "Pass" or "Redo" and indicate the total points earned.

	Developing	Basic	Proficient	Exemplary	Score
Thesis and Content	Lacking central thesis, consistency and/or purpose 1	Thesis somewhat unclear, simple, with minimal development or support 2	Arguable thesis with clear supportive evidence 3	Arguable thesis, compellingly supported with opposition clearly refuted 4	
Conventions	Little or no control of standard writing conventions, extensive errors make it difficult to get message 1	Limited control of standard writing conventions, errors starting to impede readability 2	Reasonable control of standard writing conventions, some editing necessary 3	Strong control of standard writing conventions, few errors 4	
Sentence Fluency	Writing difficult to follow or read aloud, sentences are incomplete, run-on, and/or awkward 1	Sentence structure mechanical, sometimes awkward rather than fluid, reader must slow down 2	Text flows, sentences somewhat varied, relatively easy to read aloud 3	Sentences well built, strong and varied structure make it easy to read aloud 4	
Organization	Lacks organizational structure, no apparent intro and/or conclusion 1	Structure inconsistent, attempts to organize text, intro and conclusion undeveloped or obvious 2	Generally clear and logical organization, structure a bit predictable 3	Sequence and structure strong, precise intro and conclusion 4	
Voice	No audience awareness, voice is flat, lifeless and impersonal. 1	Writer's voice may emerge at times, seldom provides sense of reader/writer interaction 2	Writer's voice is formal and engaging with some sense of "writing to be read" 3	Clear sense of "writing to be read", brings topic to life, strong audience awareness 4	
Word Choice	Language is limited, monotonous, and/or misused 1	Language is predictable, ordinary, and/or repetitious 2	Language is functional and occasionally goes beyond ordinary 3	Language is natural, interesting, figurative and precise 4	
Documentation	Many errors in documentation and works cited page, inadequate amount of citations to effectively support position 1	Some errors in documentation and works cited page, more citations of researched info is necessary 2	A few minor errors in documentation and works cited page, all researched info documented 3	All parenthetical documentation and works cited page is MLA correct, all researched info documented 4	
Overall Rating	(Pass) (Redo) Total Points Earned/Possible Points				28

PHASE II

THE PRODUCT

GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCT

1.   The product must be student-generated. It must be a showcase of the student's skills – not a parent's, friend's, or Mentor's.

2.   The product should show evidence of application and synthesis of the research paper.

3.   The product should be tangible evidence that reflects the academic stretch/risk, which the student has experienced during completion of the Project.

4.   Students are not expected to spend a lot of money in order to complete the Project. Expenditures will not enhance the evaluation of the Project.

5.   Research for the product should reflect one or more of four primary areas: personal experience, experiment, survey and/or interview.

6.   The product can be community service oriented.

7.   A group/community could benefit from the product.

8.   There will be no pairing or sharing of products.

9.   The Senior Project Steering Committee must approve the product.

10.   The product may include one or more of the following media:

- Audio/visual aid - playing original music, sounds, etc.
- Charts/graphs - visual graph of surveys, experiment results, etc.
- Video of process – video steps to final product such as building a barn
- How-to demonstration – step-by-step video of project/process such as grooming a pet
- Visual product – showing the final creation of a dress or a painting, etc.
- PowerPoint/I-Movies – physical record of an experiment or experience such as growing wheat
- Work of fiction – collection of poems, stories, novel, interview, bibliography
- Non-fiction work about an individual, historic writings, etc.
- Other – as approved by the Faculty Advisory or Steering Committee.

11.   All products must be completed and proof-of-project Journals are due to the Faculty Advisor on March _____, 20_____.

12.   The product should be related to the student's chosen career cluster.

PHASE III

THE PORTFOLIO

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Note that the organization of the Portfolio presentation is to be in the order as listed below.

ONE
_____Letter to Judges
_____Final Personal Statement

TWO
_____Letter of Commitment
_____The Thesis Research Paper (Final typed copy)
_____Works Cited
_____Justification of Internet Sources Cited
_____Thesis Research Paper Evaluation Rubric
_____Sr. Project Activity Verification Form

THREE
Four Best Works/Reflective Essays
_____Communications
_____Problem Solving
_____Teamwork
_____Technology

FOUR
_____Final Typed Résumé
_____Final List of References
_____Application (Employment)
_____Thank You Letter

FIVE
_____Post High-School Plan
_____Personal Financial Budget

SIX
_____Order of Presentation — Portfolio Checklist
_____Senior Project presentations
_____Oral presentation Information

(OPTIONAL) SEVEN
_____Letter(s) of Recommendation
_____Acceptance letters from colleges and/or programs
_____Certificates or Awards
_____Additional Best Works

THE SENIOR PROJECT JOURNAL

1. All students must complete a Journal as a part of their Senior Project. The Journal is a component of the Project portfolio.

2. Students should record at minimum of one entry per week during the project period.

3. Include the following information at the top of each Journal page: the date and the number of hours that you worked on the project during that particular week.

4. Each entry should cover the following:

   a. Describe what you did on the Senior Project during that week.
   b. Write your personal reaction or evaluation of what you did that week. Some things you may wish to include:
      i. Did you like what you were doing? Why or why not?
      ii. Did everything happen exactly as you expected, or were there some surprises?
      iii. How will you benefit from what you are learning?
      iv. What frustrations did you experience?
      v. What successes did you achieve?

   Please note: Even if your project is repetitive in nature, your Journal must meet these minimum requirements.

5. Remember that your Journal will be read by your Faculty Advisor and the Senior Project Steering Committee.

6. It is your responsibility to have your Faculty Advisory check your Journal each week.

SENIOR PROJECT SELF-EVALUATION

1.   Describe your Project in at least 25 words.

2.   Answer the following:

       A. Estimated total hours spent on your Project   _____

       B. Estimated number of steps to your Project   _____

          List the Steps

       C. Date Started   _____

       D. Date Completed   _____

       E. Materials Used:

       F. List every type of resource (including people)

3. Circle the appropriate response
   A. Did community resources help?   Yes   No   N/A

   B. Have you asked for advice/comments
      about your Project from other people?   Yes   No   N/A

   C. Did you utilize task analysis and time
      management principles?   Yes   No   N/A

   D. Have you ever done a project like this before?   Yes   No   N/A

   E. Would you recommend your project area for
      future Senior Project   Yes   No   N/A
      Explain:

4.   Answer in 25 words or less:

    A. Would you feel intimidated to show your Project to an expert for
       evaluation?

    B. List three things that you now know after completing your Senior
       Project.

    C. List the personal satisfaction you gained from this Project experience.

    D. Describe what risks you took in completing this Project. Consider not
       only a physical risk, but also an emotional or intellectual challenge.

E. How do you feel your Project would compare to other similar Projects? Explain.

F. How did your project allow you to learn more about your career cluster?

PHASE IV

THE PRESENTATION

STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR THE ORAL PRESENTATION

The Senior Project presentation is the culminating event, which must include the entire learning experience. It should reflect elements of the product, paper and the portfolio.

1. Prior to the presentation *(planning the event),* confirm the time and place. Also confirm with the Faculty Advisor that the judges have been invited.

2. Plan the presentation *using the presentation rubric:* Check the speech itself – Do you have an introduction (attention-getting device)? Is your outline completed? How are you going to conclude your presentation (a concluding device)?

3. Prepare audio / visual materials that you will need. Check the technology to make sure it's working and ready to use.

4. Practice and time the presentation using the audio/visual materials.

5. On the day of the presentation, arrive early to check that everything is in order and functional.

6. Keep these tips in mind when answering questions following your presentation:
   a. Answer with confidence
   b. Request clarification when necessary
   c. Admit when you don't know the answer
   d. Pack up and remove product/presentation materials

7. Bask in success — show appreciation to your Mentors, Faculty Advisors, and judges with thank you notes sharing personal reflections.

8. Remember that you will be making a formal presentation. Please dress according to presentation guidelines. If you are not sure what constitutes appropriate dress, consult your Senior Project Faculty Advisor.

9. Do not chew gum.

10. Be aware of your body language. Avoid nervous gestures that may adversely affect your presentation.

11. Maintain eye contact with the judges.

12. Do not read your presentation.

13. Practice your presentation several times until you feel comfortable with its format and content. Also, time your presentation to be sure that you

speak for a minimum of ten minutes and do not exceed the fifteen-minute maximum.

14. Proof of a product is required as a part of your oral presentation.

15. Be sure that your presentation covers the following: subject of the research paper, subject of the physical product, connection between the paper and the product, the stretch for you, and a self-evaluation.

Try to anticipate what questions your audience might ask you (or ask a parent or a friend to compose questions for you) and plan the answers you would give. The judges may not ask these exact questions, but this will give you an opportunity to practice answering questions. Remember that questions should address a clarification or extension of your topic.

SPEECH PREPARATION

Step 1: What are you going to talk about? Answer the following questions.
1. How do your paper and project connect?
2. What emotions did you experience as you worked through the paper and product/process? (anger, excitement, pride, frustration)
3. What problems did you encounter? (money, time management, skill) Explain.
4. What personal growth did you gain from the paper and product/process? What self-knowledge did you gain? What knowledge of your topic did you gain?
5. How did the Project relate to your career cluster?
6. How did the Project affect your plans for the future? Explain.
7. What Project advice would you pass on to next year's seniors?

Step 2: How am I going to say this? Use the answers to the questions above as references.
1. Organization – jot down your ideas on separate 3 x 5 index cards and arrange them into order that is logical.
2. Slip blank cards into spaces where a visual aid is needed or would be appreciated.
3. Add blank cards for the introduction and conclusion.
4. If you have a product that can be displayed, jot down your ideas for that display on another card, e.g., photographs.
5. Plan your introduction. The introduction should:
   a. Grab the audience's attention.
   b. Make the topic's thesis clear (be sure to mention both paper and product/process).
   c. Take no more than 60 seconds.
6. Plan your conclusion. A good conclusion should:
   a. Restate topic/thesis.
   b. Leave the audience thinking.
   c. Take no more than 30 seconds.
7. Plan the display of your Project. Will it be an on-going, integral part of your speech, such as a slide show? Part of your introduction? Happen after your conclusion? Will you wear it? Sit on it? Serve up samples? (Avoid distributing items during your speech – this causes too much distraction.)
8. Plan your visual aids. Two types should be included.
9. Make sure your Faculty Advisor knows what equipment you will need.
10. Look at each idea card and fill in details, colorful anecdotes, and factual information.
11. Place all cards back in order and begin practicing your speech.

Step 3: Speech techniques to remember.
1. Eye contact – This is extremely important. Practice often enough so that you rarely need to look at your cards. Remember this is a friendly audience. Your peers and your judges are pulling for you. You need the

reinforcement that their encouraging expressions will give you. Look at them. True communication happens with the eyes. A speech without eye contact is only half a speech.

2. Posture – Stand proud. You have a right to be. You have accomplished a great deal. Avoid:
    a. Gripping the podium.
    b. Locking your knees – you've come too far to faint now.
    c. Twitching, wiggling, and shaking.
3. Voice – your voice needs to:
    a. Be loud enough to be heard.
    b. Vary appropriately in pitch and tone.
4. Gesture – Use your hands to help you make your point. Gestures should be natural and spontaneous, not choreographed and mechanical.
5. Props (audio-visuals) – Plan and practice using any prop or audio-visual you will need during the presentation.

Step 4: Prepare for questions.

Of course, there is no way to know for sure what the panel members will ask you, but you can make some educated guesses and that process will provide you with the confidence and clear-headedness to take on any question. Answer the following brainstorming questions.

1. If you were a judge listening to your speech, what would you want to know?
2. What would you like people to ask?
3. What unusual qualities does your Project have that might spark interest?
4. What part of your paper might make people curious?
5. What controversial topics, if any, do you touch on?
6. What possessed you to choose this topic?
7. Who helped?
8. How did you finance it?
9. How much time did you spend?
10. Does the Project double as credit for another class?

Your Senior Project presentation should be the peak of your high school career. Your audience will be small and supportive. You will be well prepared. This is your chance to show off, to shine. Enjoy!!

PRESENTATION POISE

Posture

- Stand up straight but not stiff.
- Point your feet toward the audience with your weight evenly distributed.
- Don't place your weight on one hip and then shift to the other.
- Shifting can distract the audience.

Movement

- Move to the side or front of the podium to get nearer the audience.
- When no podium is available, stay within 4-8 feet of the front row.
- Don't stay in one spot but don't pace either. An occasional step to either side, or even a half step towards the audience for emphasis, can enhance your presentation.
- Stay close, stay direct, and stay involved with your audience.

Shoulder Orientation

- Keep your shoulders oriented toward the audience. This becomes critical when using visual aids.
- You will have to angle away from the audience sometimes, but it should not be more than 45 degrees.
- Don't speak unless you have eye contact with the audience.
- Don't talk to your visual aid.

Gestures

- Learn to gesture in front of an audience exactly as you would if you were having an animated conversation with a friend-nothing more, nothing less.
- Using natural gestures will not distract from a presentation; however, doing one of the following certainly will; so avoid:

  1. Keeping your hands in your pocket
  2. Keeping your hands handcuffed behind your back
  3. Keeping your arms crossed or flapping
  4. Wringing your hands nervously

Eye Contact

- The rule of thumb for eye contact is 1-3 seconds per person. Try not to let your eyes dart around the room.

- Try to focus on one person, not long enough to make that individual feel uncomfortable, but long enough to pull him or her into your presentation. Then move on to another person.
- Good eye contact helps establish and build rapport. It involves the audience and reduces the speaker's feeling of isolation.

Voice

- Learn to listen to yourself; stay aware not only of what you are saying but also how you are saying it. A suggestion would be to videotape your presentation and critique it.
- Monotone: Anxiety usually causes monotone voices. The muscles in the chest and throat tighten up and become less flexible, and airflow is restricted. The voice then loses its natural animation and monotone results. You must relax and release tension. Upper and lower body movement is vital.
- Talking too fast: When we become anxious, the rate of speech usually increases. Articulation is what is important. Sometimes when you talk too fast you trip over words. Breathe and slow down. Listen for the last word of a sentence, and then proceed to your next sentence. Pausing can be very effective in a presentation. This allows important points to sink in. Sometimes the audience needs a period of silence to digest what you are saying.
- Volume: Practice will solve most problems in volume. Have a person who will give you a straight answer listen to your presentation from the back of the room. Ask that person if you can be heard, if you trail off the end of a sentence, if lack of volume makes you sound insecure, or if you are speaking too loudly.

Excerpts From:

Mandel, Steve. *Effective Presentation Skills: A Practical Guide for Better Speaking.* Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1993.

GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES

Thank you for volunteering your time as a judge for the Senior Project. You have been asked to evaluate the presentation phase of this Project. The student is required to speak on his or her topic for ten to fifteen minutes using presentation notes. Students should not read from their notes. He or she should address the following issues:

- explanation and defense of research paper
  (this constitutes 75-80% of the presentation)

- the subject of the physical product,

- the connection between the paper and the product,

- the **stretch/risk** for the student, and

- a self-evaluation.

At the end of the speech, each judge should have at least one question about an aspect of the student's project. Final scores include an assessment of the student's ability to field questions as well.

You will use the following form to evaluate the oral presentation part of the Senior Project. The checklist includes a point system of evaluation. Listed below are a few suggestions for the judges.

1. Watch your body language--students receive feedback from your facial expressions, level of attention, and posture.

2. You will be asked to introduce yourself.

3. Do not ask questions until the end of the presentation. When asking questions, do not challenge the student's selection of the topic or personal beliefs. Do not argue with the student or ask personal questions.

4. As a judge, you should write comments to the students concerning their strengths and weaknesses.

ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION

Student Name: _____

Appropriate areas are circled and the overall rating is found in the score column on the right. Comments will be placed on the back of this sheet.

	Developing	Basic	Proficient	Exemplary	Score
Content (Including PDP, Paper, and Physical Application)	Content lacks reasoning and has little supporting detail, addresses only one aspect of the project 0 – 14	Content shows evidence of reasoning but provides little relevant supporting detail and/or does not cover all required areas 15 – 16	Content is well reasoned, with some insight and relevant supporting details; covers all required areas to a degree 17 – 21	Content is well reasoned, insightful and supported by relevant details; covers all required areas thoroughly 22 – 25	
Language	Problems with pronunciation and very low level of grammar 0 – 5	Language and grammar below average for a senior 6	Use of grammar enhances the presentation in parts 7 - 8	Use of grammar enhances the entire presentation 9 - 10	
Delivery	Read from notes and rarely looked at judges 0 – 5	Some problems with pauses, pacing and/or eye contact 6	Delivery is good, but not yet polished 7 – 8	Speaks with confidence, presence, poise and eye contact excellent 9 - 10	
Organization	Information very scattered and/or no audio/visual aid is used 0 – 5	Information is at times not presented in order and/or audio visual aid is not relevant 6	Most information is presented in logical order, audio-visual aid somewhat relevant 7 – 8	All information presented in logical order, audio-visual aid relevant and helpful 9 – 10	
Impromptu Skills	Speaker is unable to respond 0 – 5	Speaker seems caught off guard by questions but is able to respond 6	Speaker responds well to questions but lacks confidence 7 - 8	Speaker's knowledge is evident in responses to questions 9 – 10	
Design of Senior Project	Components of project seem fragmented and unrelated 0 – 5	One component of project hard to connect 6	Components of project seem connected but could improve 7 – 8	Paper, hours, PDP, speech, and audiovisual well planned and connected 9 - 10	
Self-Reflection	Speaker does not address knowledge, skills, or lessons gained 0 – 11	Speaker exhibits little evidence of self-reflection 12 – 14	Speaker exhibits some evidence of high level thinking and reflection 15 - 17	Speaker exhibits abundant evidence of higher levels of thinking and reflection 18 – 20	
Attire	Speaker is not appropriately dressed 0			Speaker is wearing appropriate attire 5	
Overall Rating	(Pass) (Redo) Total Points Earned/Possible Points				_____ 100